

Lutheran Parsonage
51 King Street
Christiansted
St. Croix
Virgin Islands

HABS No. VI-26

HABS
VI,
1-CHRIS
44-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

Lutheran Parsonage
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Masonry Wall bearing - 3 wings built along
the front, rear and side of a town lot
around an interior courtyard - 60 feet by 96 feet

GENERAL STATEMENT

Architectural Character

A good example of one of the architecturally more pretentious medium-sized town houses of Christiansted, St. Croix. It is not typical, but has, however, the construction details and the architectural idiom of the Danish Virgin Islands.

The original design has not changed in its main features. Refinishing and modification to the interior have been made without greatly altering the general appearance of the building, but has tended to simplify and lessen the effectiveness of the building.

Condition of Fabric

The structural condition of the building is good to fair. Some interior woodwork is termite infested, but the spread of the infestation seems to have been arrested. The building is fairly well maintained.

EXTERIOR

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Orientation:

The main wing towards the street faces due northeast. The side wing is built against the northwest lot line and the rear wing is parallel to the main wing and built against the northeast boundary line of the lot.

Foundations:

Rubble masonry in lime mortar.

Wall Construction:

Main wing is plastered rubble masonry with brick lining of corners and wall openings. The side and rear wings are both of painted brick masonry construction.

The street wing is 5 bays long and 4 bays wide. The 2nd floor is built to the former street line, projecting over the sidewalk, and is supported on five arches and 6 pillars. The pillars have moulded capitals and the arches, decorated keystones. The corners of the wing have quoins, and a horizontal moulded plaster band defines the 2nd floor level.

A plastered brick cornice with a dentil course, a parapet wall and a low-pitched tympanum over the 3 central bays crown the walls.

Openings - Doorways and doors:

The main entrance is in the center bay of the street wing. It is flanked by two engaged Tuscan columns supporting a triangular pediment.

The cornice of the pediment is related to the horizontal band previously mentioned. Other doors do not have any exterior decoration except plastered projecting keystones. The doorways have stormdoors of double-board construction. The rear wing, originally a stable and carriage house, has three large picket gates of braced rail construction in arched gateways.

Windows & Shutters:

The 2nd floor window openings toward the street have moulded flat window heads and sills supported on brackets. The rear wing has arched openings with a recessed panel below it the full width of the opening. All windows have shutters of double-board construction. The 2nd floor of the front and rear wing has a combination of fixed and movable louvres.

Roof Shape & covering:

The front and rear wings have hipped roofs. The roof of the side wing is of the same slope and height and is continuous with the other roofs. As previously mentioned the front wing has a cornice and a parapet wall with an internal gutter. On the side and rear wing the roof projects slightly over the exterior walls and there is no cornice.

The roofing throughout is corrugated metal on sheathing and rafters.

The rear wing has a "widows walk" with a roof supported on wood posts.

The side wing has a chimney over a brick masonry kitchen range.

Towards the court, the 2nd story west bay of the rear wing has a balcony of recent construction, probably a replacement of an earlier construction.

Plan:

Street Wing: Ground floor has a central hallway from front to back with a room on either side. To the rear left as you enter from the street, the hallway opens into a stairhall. On the second floor the stairhall provides access to two rooms toward the street, a room towards the courtyard and the second story gallery of the side wing.

Side & Rear Wings: The ground floor has a series of rooms in a row interconnected and accessible from the courtyard. The second floor has a gallery towards the courtyard with a row of rooms behind it. The kitchen is located in the side wing.

Stairways:

A double-run staircase with open balustrade, square-sectioned wood balusters, turned newel post and carved hand rail is located in the stairhall of the street wing.

An exterior straight run masonry staircase connects the courtyard with the previously mentioned balcony of the rear wing. A double-run wood

staircase leads from the 2nd story to the widows walk above the roof of the rear wing.

Floors:

The ground floor of the street wing is paved with a dark yellow octagonal and square clay tiles decorated with a geometric band and plant design in black. The decoration has worn off except along the walls. The rear and side wings have brick, Gotland limestone tile and concrete pavement. The second floor has tongue-and-groove pine board flooring throughout.

Walls and Ceilings Finishes:

All interior masonry walls are plastered and painted. Wood partition walls, which occur only in the rear and side wings, have wood sheathing on both sides of structural framing. On the ground floor the ceilings throughout are wood with exposed beams. On the second floor the ceilings are plastered (street wing) or are furred board ceilings. The interior doors are double, six-panelled doors or single 3-panelled doors.

Trim:

The street wing has moulded door casings, baseboard and, on the second floor, cornices, ceiling rosettes and chair rails.

Hardware:

Storm shutters and gates are equipped with wrought-iron strap hinges, wall hooks, head and sill hooks and in some instances with bar brackets and ring door pulls.

Interior shutters and doors have H and L hinges or wing hinges, porcelain knobs and mortise locks.

Lighting:

The building is wired for electricity throughout. Earlier means of

lighting is not discernible.

OTHER

General Setting:

The building is located on a city lot 76 x 100 feet in the block bounded by King, Queen's Cross, Strand and King's Cross Streets. A driveway along the northeast lot line gives access to the courtyard. The yard is paved in yellow brick and Gotland limestone tile with open planting areas on the east and south sides of the courtyard. A masonry wall approximately 10' high separates the property from the lot to the north.

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November 1959

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September 1984